



TOWN OF GRAFTON
GRAFTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
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MINUTES

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

February 23, 2016

Grafton Municipal Center, Conference Room F

7:00 p.m.

Members Present: Daryl Rynning, Chairman
Laura Often, Vice Chair
Peter Carlson, Secretary
Maureen Cohen, Member
Jennifer Connelly

Student Bianca Carangelo
Representatives: Hannah Kelley

Also Present: Dr. James Cummings, Superintendent of Schools
Daniel Gale, Finance Director

Call to Order – Open Session

- a. Chairperson's Update:
- b. Community Groups and Citizens

1. Educational Reports

- a. NGES School Improvement Plan: North Grafton Elementary School Principal Julie Flynn shared what had been going on at NGES to date. Students participated in creating a new front board; it was a great way for students to come together. She thanked the custodians and Kate Runne for their assistance. Ms. Flynn commended the School Advisory Council for their continued support. Ms. Flynn gave an overview of the following goals; #1 Use data to support all students' learning by targeting instruction flexibility. #2 Research and pilot/implement STEAM connections based on current mapped curricula. #3 Implement Professional Learning Communities. #4 Create a parent resource that includes academic expectations at each grade level, community supports and resources within the school and town. Ms. Flynn noted that Grade K-1 levels were using ORIGO and they would continue with this; staff felt it was working well with the standards. Ms. Flynn reviewed slides of students working together on activities, also shown were pictures of pre-school students working with Sara Banister from the Grafton Library. The staff was continuing to work on projects such as CTTC (committed to technology collaboration). Staff was meeting regularly

outside of school on a monthly basis. CTTC was supporting programs such as Seesaw, Google drive; and puppet pals. These tools help parents get a glimpse of what is ongoing in the classroom and were great parent teacher communication tool. SST (Student Support Team) was also ongoing; this group comprised of grade level teachers, specialists and psychologist continued to support students who may be struggling. They also help guide and support teachers. Grade level leaders continuing to meet regularly, they work in teams and support each other along the way. They were also reading a book called Data Into Action which was helping them with a systematic approach to reviewing data and using it in the most efficient/effective way. Mrs. Often thanked Ms. Flynn and stated she was happy to see STEAM being worked into the curriculum. Mrs. Rynning thanked Ms. Flynn for attending stating it was an excellent presentation, informative and thorough.

- b. NGES School Report: Mrs. Carr, Ms. Runne and Mrs. McCullen were present to give an overview of Fun with STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math). The SAC field trip to WPI for the AweSTEM Conference was discussed. A group of area schools were able to experience different STEAM projects. Teachers were able to meet other educators and get great ideas for the students. This helped them incorporate and implement STEAM connections. Mrs. McCullen outlined how she was connecting STEAM Curriculum to Pre-K students. She also partnered with Sara Banister of the Grafton Library for monthly STEM story time sessions at both NGES and SGES. Ms. Banister had developed and organized kits based on curriculum. STEM was exciting and easy to incorporate into daily routines. Mrs. McCullen reviewed examples of working STEM into everyday routines such as how the 1st grade was working on 3 STEAM projects connected to science and social studies curriculum. The students learned problem solving and collaboration with classrooms. Several slides were shown of the students working on their projects. Students Kenley Fletcher, Aryan Modi and Sean Stelmach were present to outline and explain what STEAM stood for and how it helped each of them in the classroom. Mrs. Flynn discussed how she planned to move forward with STEAM and how they would be reaching out to parents and the general community in hopes of getting more support. They wish to have a service or goods experts come in and give a presentation. This could be a parent who may be a scientist or an engineer who could come into the classroom and share their experiences. It could also be a local business or firm who wished to present their life situations with the students. In closing, Mrs. Flynn discussed the new Penguin mascot painting and the concept of holding a contest to name the penguin. Mrs. Rynning thanked the staff and students for a great job presenting. The presentation clearly showed how they have incorporated leaning tools across the board making it very interesting to the children. Working with the Art department and the curriculum was a fantastic idea. Mrs. Cohen said it was good to see this concept starting from preschool moving up. Mrs. Often agreed, noting working together was so very important. The Students and Teachers were thanked for their presentation.

Grafton Public School
School Committee Meeting Minutes

- c. Special Education Update – Arnold Lundwall was present to give a follow-up to his Program Overview given in November on the intensive needs/adaptive classroom. Ms. Sala was the lead teacher ranging from Pre-School to 1st grade. All her students will remain with her next year. The type of learners was outlined along with their areas of needs. The learners were grouped similarly but had one student with more intensive needs and required close monitoring and 1-1 attention. Mr. Lundwall reviewed a sample of their schedules noting it was individualized but very fluid. Mr. Lundwall showed videos outlining the wonderful experiences and student success stories. Mrs. Connelly said it was great seeing videos, it allowed them to see and understand the hard work that goes into these classrooms. Mr. Carlson noted how great it was to see the staff and their excitement over the learners' achievements; their excitement tells a tale as well. Mr. Lundwall hoped to continue looking into growth within districts so students can stay in their home districts. The School Committee thanked Mr. Lundwall for the update.

Before moving forward, Mrs. Rynning apologized for not introducing and welcoming their newest member Jennifer Connelly.

2. General Business

- a. SWCEC 2nd Quarter Collaborative Report: Dr. Cummings stated that through legislation he must present a quarterly SWCEC report to the school committee on the collaborative participation which included the Assabet Valley Collaborative and the Southern Worcester Education Collaborative. Dr. Cummings presented this report. A motion was made by Mr. Carlson to accept the 2nd Quarter report as presented. Motion seconded by Mrs. Cohen. Motion carried 5-0 School Committee and 2-0 School Representatives.
- b. Medicaid Overview - Finance Director Dan Gale gave an overview of the Medicaid program which included the programs background and how it worked. The creation and funding began in 1979 with the Federal Government requiring public education to all students regardless of their disabilities, therefore additional staff was needed and this Medicaid program was created to assist with the reimbursement of some of the cost associated with services. The MGL states that all revenues go to the Town's general fund; however two revenues go directly to the school fund, circuit breaker and school choice. Mr. Gale noted that the town contributes a lot back to the school budget. Mr. Gale reviewed the services of New England Medical Billing a firm hired to assist with collection, data collection and reimbursements. They also advise the town to maximize its reimbursement. Mr. Gale reviewed two areas; direct services claiming and administrative claiming which NEMB helps with. Mr. Gale reviewed the expected revenue for the upcoming year noting it was a bit higher as more parents have signed off on the necessary forms. Mr. Gale gave a history of revenue collected from FY14-FY16. He also reviewed a spread sheet showed the State how the Town & School allocates funds.

3. School Committee Member Reports

- a. Mr. Carlson would give an update at the next meeting; the last CIPC meeting had been postponed.
- b. Mrs. Cohen attended MASC training a few weeks back noting one take away being a discussion on Social Media. She spoke with the speaker who would be willing to attend a future workshop to discuss this further with the group.
- c. Mrs. Often discussed a recently approved NGPTG mini grant for standing desks in the 4th and 5th grades, as a trial. Once data was collected they hoped to come in and present. Mrs. Often said it was a great trial and she would be interested in thinking of ways to get more of these into the classroom if the results came back positive. Mr. Carlson would be interested in seeing if other schools were using them. Mrs. Cohen had attended an assistant principal training session and this had been a topic during the social /emotional training. She too would be interested in seeing if other schools were using them. Dr. Cummings could bring this question up with the collaborative.
- d. Ms. Carangelo said the Student Council recently met; one of their projects was preparing donation bags to be distributed to homeless shelters. Each grade participating had different items to contribute.

4. Superintendent's Report

- a. District Update - Dr. Cummings provided an updated list of activities. He provided a flyer from You Inc. He will be formalizing a partnership with You Inc. They provide a range of services such as consultation, counseling, work with parents, training, testing etc.. Dr. Cummings looks forward to working with them. Dr. Cummings received a letter from residents Gail and David Hudek regarding their daughter Katherine. Katie, who is home schooled had excelled in science and recently received an award as a semifinalist in the Intel Science Talent Search competition. With this, Intel gives a \$1,000 donation to the area district school. Mr. Gale is working on the details of the donation and once received they will determine the best way to utilize the funds. Dr. Cummings thanked the Hudek family. Dr. Cummings noted that about a year ago, Maggie Parone presented her artwork to the committee. She has continued her work and recently received three gold key awards, a silver and two honorable mentions. She will move on to show her work in New York City and if she wins there her work will be displayed at Carnegie Hall show.

5. Future Agenda Planning:

- A. Mrs. Rynning discussed communication she had relative to the website and having someone come I to discuss the software and its capabilities. Mrs. Rynning thought this could be combined with the social media presentation. Possibly combine that with Social Media.
6. Approval of Minutes - A motion was made by Mr. Carlson to approve the meeting minutes of January 12, 2016 as presented. Motion seconded by Mrs. Often.

Motion carried 4-0 with 1 abstaining and 1-0 School Representatives, 1 abstaining.

7. Financial Report

- a. A motion was made by Mr. Carlson that the School Committee approve Warrant #33, dated February 11, 2016 in the amount of \$401,320.64. Motion seconded by Mrs. Carangelo. Motion carried 4-0 with 1 abstaining. 2-0 Student Representatives.
- b. A motion was made by Mr. Carlson that the School Committee approve Warrant #35, dated February 25, 2016 in the amount of \$288,123.3. Motion seconded by Ms. Carangelo. Motion carried 5-0 School Committee 2-0 Student Representatives.

8. Policy - The following policies were addressed:

IC/ICA School Year School Calendar. A motion was made by Mr. Carlson to accept IC/ICA as presented, as a first reading. Motion seconded by Mrs. Often. Motion carried 5-0 School Committee, 2-0 Student Representatives.

IKA Grading/Assessment Systems. A motion was made by Mr. Carlson to accept as reviewed. Motion seconded by Mrs. Often. Motion carried 5-0 School Committee, 2-0 Student Representatives.

IKAA Tests and Examination: This policy will be reviewed by Mr. Pignataro to determine its relevance before approving it as a first reading.

IKAB Report Cards/Progress Reports: A motion was made by Mr. Carlson to accept IKAB Report Cards/Progress as presented as a first reading. Motion seconded by Mrs. Cohen. Motion carried 5-0 School Committee, 2-0 Student Representatives.

IKF Graduation Requirements – This included what Mr. Pignataro presented a few weeks ago. Mr. Pignataro reviewed and edited this to be sure it was in line with his standards. Mr. Carlson made a motion to accept policy IKF Graduation Requirements as presented, as a first reading. Motion seconded by Mrs. Cohen. Motion carried 5-0 School Committee, 2-0 Student Representatives.

AC Non Discrimination – A motion was made by Mrs. Often to approve AC Non Discrimination as written. Motion seconded by Mrs. Cohen. Motion carried 5-0 School Committee, 2-0 Student Representatives.

9. Correspondence – None

10. Executive Session – At 9:15 p.m. a motion was made by Mr. Carlson to enter into executive session for the purpose of non union negotiations under Chapter 30A,

Grafton Public School
School Committee Meeting Minutes

Paragraph 21, Section A, to conduct strategy sessions in preparation of discussions with non union personnel and to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with non union personnel. Motion seconded by Mrs. Cohen. Motion carried 5-0 by roll call vote; Mrs. Rynning aye, Mrs. Often aye, Mrs. Connelly aye, Mrs. Cohen aye, Mr. Carlson aye. The committee will return to open session to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted



Cindy Ide
Recording Secretary